



Written by [Joe Wolverton, II, J.D.](#) on May 27, 2010

Calderon and Obama Blame America for Mexico's Woes

Last week the President of Mexico set off on a human rights lecture tour of Washington, D.C. and chief among his claue of foot tappers was the President of the United States.

At the invitation of President Barack Obama and leaders of the House and Senate, Mexican [President Felipe Calderon stood and addressed](#) a joint session of Congress on May 20. President Calderon took advantage of the forum and recriminated, reprimanded, and lectured the American people and their lawfully elected representatives for a litany of shortcomings and policies that have exacerbated the dangers along our southern border.



The first volley was fired at the “high demand for drugs” in America that encourages trafficking and creates the violent atmosphere that is the companion of that illicit commerce. Calderon supported his indictment of the United States with the words of our own Secretary of State. “The Secretary of State, Clinton has said, ‘We accept our share of responsibility. We know that drug demand generated, in large part, this illegal trade.’” He then goes on to congratulate the United States for its effort to “reduce drug use.”

Calderon’s next shot was the “flow of high-powered weapons” across the border. He prefaces his remarks with a misstatement of the Second Amendment: “And I understand that the purpose of the Second Amendment is to ensure that all good American citizens have the ability to defend themselves and their nation.” There are a few key qualifications on the right to bear arms that do not appear in the Constitution, but made it into President Calderon’s restatement thereof. The Second Amendment does not restrict the right to bear arms to “good American citizens.” Rather, the text of the provision simply forbids the Congress to infringe upon the rights of “the people” to keep and bear arms.

President Calderon, in the true spirit of politicians worldwide, deftly passes the buck for the increase in violent crime associated, by him, with weapons trafficking. “And if you look closely, you may realize that violence in Mexico began to grow a couple of years before I took office in 2006. This coincides, at least, with the repeal of the Assault Weapons Ban in 2004. Once again, as with their drug problem, Mexico’s president places blame for his country’s crime surge squarely at the feet of the United States.

There is a solution, however, President Calderon, assured the collected legislators. Simply “regulate the sale of these weapons.” A “return of the Assault Weapons Ban” would end crime and stop the deadly trade in weapons. Our neighbors to the south believe the end to their struggles is a repeal of constitutional guarantees on this side of the border. Perhaps President Calderon could prepare a model Second Amendment with appropriate restrictions so that peace can be restored to his nation.

As President Calderon reminded Congress that Mexico is the second largest importer of American



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goods in the world, he invited his listeners to “work with Mexico and consolidate North America....” Why, one wonders, would President Calderon want to unite his country with a country so rife with drug addicts and gun toting criminals? If the foregoing list of American faults is accurate and precipitates such horrendous conditions along the border with Mexico, would not that nation seek to distance itself as much as possible from such a deleterious influence? Imagine the peaceful and prosperous paradise into which Mexico would be transformed if it weren’t for that serpent to the north slithering around and tempting the good people of Mexico to buy guns and sell drugs.

At the conclusion of his seemingly contradictory scolding and proposal of marriage, President Calderon turned both barrels on the immigration issue. Again, every reproach is couched in the assurance of his “respect for the right of any country to set and enforce their [sic] own laws.” With that disclaimer out of the way, it was time to instruct Congress and the American people how to solve the problem of illegal immigration.

The problem, declares the sage from the South, is that the current American approach to the issue is “broken and inefficient.” The stagnant Mexican economy is, he admitted, a powerful disincentive to remaining at home, but that’s not nearly as blameworthy as the United States’ failure to establish a flow of workers and visitors that is “legal, orderly and safe.” That is to say, there wouldn’t be an illegal immigration problem if the United States would just remove all those pesky immigration laws.

Speaking of which, El Presidente saved his best berating for the sovereign state of Arizona, whose recently enacted anti-illegal immigration law was described by Calderon as “a terrible idea, using racial features as a basis for applying the law.”

Well, he got it partially right. The law in Arizona is an attempt to apply existing law, which, using Calderon’s own earlier analysis of the gun and drug trade, should be very pleasing to him as such an approach is precisely what he demands that the United States take in order to restore tranquility along our common border.

Application of existing federal immigration laws is not what President Calderon wants Arizona or any other border state to do, however. He graciously reminds Congress that President Obama himself disagrees with Arizona’s actions and brands the law as risky and inimical to the “basic values” shared by Mexico and the United States.

The most frightening risk run by Mexico if the Arizona law is successful in stemming the tide of illegal immigration is the corresponding diminution of greenbacks sent back to the home country. According to [figures published](#) by the US Immigration Support, Mexico receives about \$17 billion in remittances, that is, money sent from immigrants to family in their home country. This sum exceeds the amount of foreign direct investment in that country. It is little wonder that President Calderon is concerned. If that cash cow is driven out of the United States, there is no pasture green enough to make up the difference.

Curiously, the contempt expressed by President Calderon for Arizona and for her lawfully promulgated attempt to halt the immigration across her southern border, is not expressed in his own country with regard to the brutal manner in which its own extremely exclusionary immigration laws are executed.

Mexico is frequently included in lists of human rights offenders, especially with regard to its official treatment of immigrants who enter across its southern border. According to a report by the National Human Rights Commission published in the [USA Today](#), “in one six-month period from September 2008 through February 2009, at least 9,758 migrants were kidnapped and held for ransom in Mexico — 91 of them with the direct participation of Mexican police.”



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Furthermore, a similar account asserts that during one month in 2008 at 10 migrant shelters, Mexican authorities were behind migrant attacks in 35 of 240 cases, or 15%.

The dossier of such abuses is voluminous. Of particular interest, given President Calderon's words in Congress and in the Rose Garden the previous day, is the fact that existing Mexican immigration law mandates that federal police demand the production of documents from any and all immigrants. And unlike the law in Arizona, there is no requirement of reasonable suspicion of illegal status or that such a demand be made only in consequence of an underlying lawful stop.

In Mexico, law enforcement forcefully demands the production of papers from all suspected immigrants and according to some reports, the experience is particularly frightening for Central Americans. One man quoted in the *USA Today* article claims that Mexican authorities "routinely harass Central Americans" and beat them and rob them before setting them free to find their own way back to their country of origin.

While wining and dining his Mexican counterpart, one wonders whether President Obama took advantage of his audience with Calderon to discuss the state of Mexican immigration law where people are "[subject to suspicion simply because of what they look like.](#)" Despite floating the specter of such abuses by Arizona law enforcement in consequence of the passage of S.B. 1070, President Obama demurred when given the chance to decry the very real and official mistreatment of immigrants that occurs today and everyday along Mexico's southern border.

So, in light of these accusations, perhaps President Obama should not stand in the Rose Garden of the White House, in front of the flag of the United States of America, and nod his head mournfully while a foreign leader lectures the America people on human rights violations. Likewise, perhaps representatives of the people of United States should not stand and applaud when that foreign leader stands in the well of that august chamber and blames the United States for his own nation's failures.

Photo: Mexican president Felipe Calderon addresses a joint session of Congress on Capitol Hill in Washington on May 20: AP Images



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